

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested.

Applicant affirms the election to prosecute claims 1-5 without traverse. The method claims 6-8 have been cancelled from the application without prejudice.

Applicant calls to the examiner's attention the submission of formal drawings at the time of filing, but no Drawing Review (PTO-948) has been received approving the drawings. It is requested that the examiner verify the approval of the drawings.

Claim 1 has been amended in such manner as to distinguish applicants' invention more clearly over Kashmerick. Claim 1, as amended, recites a gasket plate having an annular flange formed as one piece of the same material as the gasket plate and in surface to surface contact with an annular portion of the plate surrounding an aperture to the plate. The annular flange has areas of varying thickness that are spaced arcuately about the aperture. The flange further varies in a radial extent from the aperture, such that relatively thicker areas of the flange have a relatively greater radial extent than that of relatively thinner areas of the flange which have a relatively lesser radial extent. Kashmerick teaches firstly extruding its flanges and then trimming its extruded flanges to provide a uniform height of the flange, which is then folded, resulting in a flange of uniform radial extent as illustrated in Figure 1. It is noted that the flanges 36' in Figures 6A and 6B are of uniform length while having a varying thickness. On the contrary, claim 1 of the present application calls for a flange having both varying thickness and varying radial extent in its folded condition, which is neither taught nor suggested by Kashmerick. It is respectfully submitted, therefore, that claim 1, as amended, distinguishes applicants' invention patentably over Kashmerick and should be allowed.

Independent claim 3 likewise has been amended to distinguish applicants'

invention patentably over Kashmerick. Claim 3 recites the annular flange as having both a varying thickness and an outer annular margin of varying radial extent relative to the aperture which the flange surrounds. Kashmerick neither teaches or suggests providing a flange of this nature and thus claim 3 is believed to distinguish applicants' invention patentably over Kashmerick.

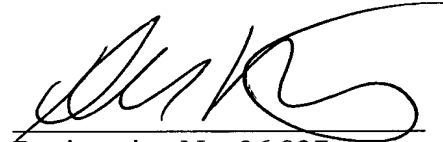
It is believed that this application now is in condition for allowance. Further and favorable action is requested.

The Patent Office is authorized to charge or refund any fee deficiency or excess to Deposit Account No. 06-0420.

Respectfully submitted,

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